

Amendment Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Serial No. 09/989,373
Sughrue Ref: Q67325

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 1 is the only independent claim.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that dependent claims 4 and 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, Applicants have not rewritten these claims in independent form at this time, but instead added only some of the recitations of claim 4 to claim 1, as is discussed below with respect to claim 1.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over previously cited Ogawa et al. (US 5,115,108) in view of previously cited Ichikawa (US 4,401,864).

Applicants have added some of the language from allowable claim 4 to claim 1. Specifically, Applicants have amended claim 1 to recite that when the operating knob is moved from a first-stage switching operation to a final-stage switching operation “said outer portion of the one of the rubber contact portions is displaced downwardly to a position such that the outer portion is around said inner portion of the one of the rubber contact portions.”

The fact that the outer portion is capable of being depressed downwardly to a position around the inner portion allows the outer portion to be depressed downwardly without producing a clicking feeling when the operating knob is moved from a first-stage switching operation to a

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final-stage switching operation. *See* Specification at page 13, line 19- page 14, line 7; and Figs. 5A and 5B.

In contrast, Applicants see no teaching or suggestion that Ogawa's wall portions 19a produce a click feeling by a resilient force, but do not produce a click feeling when the switch is moved from a first-stage switching operation to a final-stage switching operation and the outer portion of the one of the rubber contact portions is displaced downwardly to a position such that the outer portion is around the inner portion of the one of the rubber contact portions.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of amended claim 1. In addition, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of dependent claims 2 and 3 at least because of their dependency from claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

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The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: October 25, 2004